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### 'States of change'? One hundred years of the JUC

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**“States of Change?” One Hundred Years of the JUC****Abstract**

The Joint University Council for Social Studies (JUCSS) was formed 100 years ago at the end of the First World War in 1918. Its expressed aim was to coordinate and develop the work of social study departments across the UK, as part of the larger project of post-war reconstruction. In October 2018, an event entitled “States of Change?” was held in London to celebrate this history and to explore what, if any, kind of future the JUC (as currently constituted) should have. At the event, I gave a short historical presentation that examined social work education’s history in the context of the JUCSS’s origins and development. This paper picks up some of the key ideas from this presentation in more detail. It will be argued that tensions which existed in the formation of the JUCSS in 1918 still exist today, not least because they are emblematic of the ambivalences and complexities that are at the heart of social work and social work education, then and now. Furthermore, it will be suggested that that social work as an academic discipline must pay heed to these tensions if it is to survive – and thrive – in the academy today. (192)

## **“States of Change?” One Hundred Years of the JUC**

### **Introduction**

This paper takes as its starting-point the title of an event held in London in October 2018, which celebrated the 100-year history of the Joint University Council (JUC).

“States of Change?” brought together members of the current JUC’s two constituent committees, Social Work Education Committee (SWEC) and Public Administration Committee (PAC), not only to consider the JUC’s past, but also to look to its future, asking what role a JUC might play in the next 100 years. My role at the event was to give a brief account of the early history of the JUCSS, and it is this historical reflection which is developed in this paper. Unpacking the history, I suggest, provides an ideal opportunity for critical reflection on the issues and challenges that faced (and still face) social work education in the UK today. These issues and challenges coalesce around four key interconnecting themes:

- The changing relationship between social work education and government;
- The idea of collaboration/partnership and the challenge in realising this;
- The role of training and practice within social work education;
- The impact of gender (and especially women) within social work and social work education.

While the JUCSS is a UK organisation and this is a UK ‘story’, there is little doubt that the issues and challenges discussed here will be familiar to social work academics in other parts of the world, including those who are members of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW). I hope that others will wish to pick up these key questions from their own country settings in future journal articles.

I will begin by outlining the origins and development of the JUCSS, placing this account within a broader discussion of the social and academic context. The four themes will then be teased out in more detail before conclusions that might inform future deliberations of the JUC are offered. I will first, however, offer a brief explanation of the methodology used in writing this paper, beginning with a clarification of the use of acronyms.

### **Methodology for this paper**

The paper makes substantial use of two acronyms: JUCSS and JUC. The first refers to the original formation of the Joint University Council for Social Studies which, as we will see, was a broadly-based coalition of interests. The second refers to the title in current usage, the Joint University Council, which is an umbrella title for an organisation that has two distinct committees, Public Administration and Social Work Education.

The paper is, in the main, a reflective discussion, not a reporting on empirical research. The underpinning methodology is qualitative, based as it is on a literature review, supported by observations from interviews with three key respondents, each of whom shared their views on their history of involvement with the JUC. No attempt was made to gather opinions from the current JUC membership, since my main interest was on historical documents. Nevertheless, taking part in the centennial event allowed me to draw more widely on the impressions of those who attended the meeting, and these form part of the additional resources drawn on in the concluding section of the paper.

I began by accessing all available primary JUCSS sources (reports written by JUCSS personnel, newspaper stories, magazine articles about the JUCSS). These provided useful information about what was said and not said, by whom and in what ways (Scott, 2006). I also carried out an extensive literature search for secondary sources in the three academic disciplines represented in the JUCSS, that is, social work, social administration/social policy and public administration, hoping to find commentaries on the JUCSS and its role. The literature search was, on the whole, disappointing; I found that very little had been written about the JUCSS. In truth, while social work has not been good at recording its history (Cree, 2013; Lorenz, 2007; Payne, 2015), research on the history of social work education is even more limited (Cree, 2017 and Vicary *et al.*, 2018; McCulloch, 2018; Cree, 2018). What has made this paper possible, however, is the much broader knowledge of social work education that I bring after 26 years as a social work educator in the UK, as well as my own background as a historian and a sociologist. This has allowed me to locate the JUCSS story in its wider context in a way that would not otherwise have been possible.

This is, then, an 'insider' reflection on social work education history, with all the special insight which that brings (Branick and Coghlan, 2007). However, it is also important to be clear that I have never been an active member of any of the JUC's committees, and for this reason, my knowledge is also that of an 'outsider' in terms of the day-to-day running of committees. I see this as potentially useful, allowing me a degree of objectivity, if not impartiality, that might not otherwise have been possible (Payne and Payne, 2004).

## **Beginnings**

In 1918, ten universities came together to form the JUC for Social Studies (JUCSS). These were the Universities of Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, London (Economics, Bedford College and King's College for Women) and Manchester as well as Armstrong College (Newcastle), and University of Wales (Aberystwyth College and University College of South Wales). Of these, seven already had full-time university Social Study courses extending for at least a year, either run by the university or closely connected with it. But why a JUCSS, why social studies and why then?

### Why a JUCSS?

To answer this question, we need to look no further than the series of reports written by the pioneer of social work education, Elizabeth Macadam. She published four reviews of social work education (Macadam 1914, 1925, 1934 and 1945). It is her second book that recounts the early beginnings of the JUCSS.

Macadam states that in the early years of the twentieth century, training for social work had become 'fashionable'; courses had sprung up, 'good, bad and indifferent' (1925, p.37) and it was felt that there needed to be coordination to ensure that standards might be maintained. In response to this, a Joint Social Studies Committee had been established in London in 1917 by invitation from the Home Secretary, with representation from government departments, employers, welfare organisations and university departments of social study. (The government at this time was a coalition led by the Liberal, David Lloyd George.) This committee

instituted lectures on 'post-war problems' and attempted to coordinate the various training programmes that had developed 'to meet the needs and fashions of the time' (Macadam, 1925, p.37). It also organised two conferences, one (in 1917) on social training and another (in 1918) on training for welfare work in factories. Both conferences were hosted by the Home Office, and the second conference ended with a recommendation to form a national (UK-wide) council. Subsequently, the JUCSS held its first meeting on 27th April 1918, attended by two representatives from each of nine universities and four delegates from London University; another five people were also co-opted onto the council.

The first JUCSS report published in 1918 (JUCSS, 1918) details both the aims and membership of the council. Here we learn that its aim was 'the co-ordination and development of the work of social study departments in Great Britain and Ireland' (JUCSS, 1918, p. 3). Two further reports followed (JUCSS, 1921 and 1926). The membership in 1918 reflects a wide range of disciplinary interests, including academics from Economics, Law, Education, History and Philosophy. It also demonstrates the high regard in which the JUCSS was held. This was, without question, a council made up of 'the great and the good', with four Sirs, eleven Professors and two Principals in its ranks; twenty-one were men and eight were women. One of the co-opted members, John St. George Heath, was working as a civil servant at the Ministry of Labour; he was former warden of Toynbee Hall university settlement (for more information, see Bamford, 2015 and Scotland, 2007) and lecturer at the London School of Economics. Heath was elected Honorary Secretary/Treasurer, meanwhile Sir William Ashley, economic historian at the University of Birmingham and policy adviser to government, was appointed

Chairman. Following Heath's untimely death from influenza in 1919, Elizabeth Macadam, one of the first social work lecturers at Liverpool University and already a JUC member, became Honorary Secretary. Macadam had been seconded to the Ministry of Munitions in 1916 to develop training courses for welfare workers in factories. She was therefore well-placed to lead the JUCSS, a position she continued to hold for the next 25 years.

### Why social studies?

The term 'social studies' was the generic term that was used at the time to cover the theory and practice that was felt to be necessary to equip people to become social workers. So for Macadam, social study was quite simply, 'education and training for social work' (1925, p.15). But what was social work? Here are two suggestions from the early years:

'Social work is so vague and elastic an expression that its use is only justified by its great convenience' (Macadam, 1914, p. 1).

'All work that is worth the name is social work' (Muirhead, 1925, p. 5).

A survey of students who took the University of Birmingham social studies' courses (established in 1908) in the first 20 years found that graduates went on to work in the following settings and jobs:

- 'Public Departments, central and local: factory inspectors, inspectors of boarded-out children, sanitary inspectors and health visitors, women police, probation officers, relieving officers, investigators of Old Age Pension claims etc.



- Voluntary bodies: welfare workers in factories, hospital almoners, organisers or secretaries of voluntary organisations, settlement workers etc.’ (Davis, 2008, p. 5).

Social studies’ courses were clearly preparing people for a huge range of jobs. But they were not only preparing people for work, they were also educating people for citizenship. The first JUCSS report (1918) acknowledges that while there had been teaching of political science and public administration at universities over a number of years, social study was different, ‘in spirit, in method and in purpose’:

‘In spirit, because it is distinctly and continuously conscious of the close interconnexion of all the several sides of human life in society. In method, because the formal instruction is closely associated with “practical work”, by which is meant the acquiring of first-hand knowledge of existing social conditions and of personal experience in the working of social institutions. In purpose, because it invites students who have a definite intention to devote themselves to what – with equal indefiniteness, but equal intelligibility – is known as “social work”, whether as paid officials of public bodies or organizations, as members of local authorities, or as public spirited citizens, and who in their future work will be brought into personal touch with people of different classes and with the varied civic agencies of a modern town’ (JUCSS, 1918, p. 6).

The differentness of social studies ‘in spirit, in method and in purpose’ will be teased out further in the discussion section of this paper. Meanwhile, it was also highlighted a few years later, when Macadam explained that social study was ‘a method of

preparing men and women for the coming profession of social administration in all its forms, public and private, paid and unpaid, and not less for the ordinary duties and privileges of citizenship' (1925, p. 11). She goes on to call for a 'new learned profession of Public Administration', concluding that 'social work is a profession in the making' (1925, p.22).

What this demonstrates is that Macadam made little or no distinction between 'social administration', 'Public Administration' (to which she gives capitals) and 'social work'. On the contrary, she uses the terms almost interchangeably, since, as she believed, all required training in social studies. Similarly, she made no distinction between training for paid social work and training for volunteering or citizenship; all were thought to be of equal value, and all would benefit from training in social studies.

### Why then?

There is one simple answer to this question. The JUCSS began in 1918 because there was demand for it. But demand, as we will see, was driven by need, and by the impact of very different forces, before, during and after the First World War.

Classes in social studies had begun some years earlier in the 1890's at the Women's University Settlement in London, and from then on, schools of social study had emerged gradually, often affiliated to, rather than run by, universities, firstly, at the new London School of Sociology and Economics in 1902, then at Liverpool University in 1904 and Birmingham University in 1908, followed by Bristol, Leeds, Glasgow and Manchester by 1912. The schools of social study should be understood as both responding to, and anticipating, the major changes that were

taking place in the social and political context, as the old mechanisms of the Poor Law were gradually replaced by new social legislation introduced between 1906 and 1914 in relation to children, older people, offenders, unemployed people and health insurance for workers (including the 1907 Probation of Offenders Act, 1908 Old-Age Pensions Act, 1908 Children (UK) Act and 1911 National Insurance Act). The new legislation led to an increase in demand for trained staff to work in both central and local government settings, but as Macadam argues, it was the First World War that was to give 'an unexpected stimulus ... to the social training movement' (1925, p. 86). In 1915, 250 munitions' factories had come under direct government control and another 22,000 factories now worked to government contracts (Wightman, 1999). As a result, there were not enough trained people to work in welfare and management roles in these factories, and so the Ministry of Munitions funded students onto the newly-emerging social studies courses (Macadam, 1925). The Ministry of Reconstruction, set up under the Ministries Act 1917 to promote the restoration and improvement of normal industrial, trading and social conditions at the end of the war, co-ordinated the work of other government departments, conducted or supervised investigations into measures of reconstruction and formulated plans. One of its initiatives was to establish a Joint Social Studies Committee in London in 1917 led by the Home Secretary, with representation from government departments, employers, welfare organisations and university departments of social study. This committee instituted lectures on 'post-war problems' and attempted to coordinate the various training programmes that had developed 'to meet the needs and fashions of the time' (Macadam, 1925, p. 86). It also organised two conferences, one (in 1917) on social training and another (in 1918) on training for welfare work in factories. Both conferences were hosted by the Home Office, and the second conference ended

with a recommendation to form a national (UK-wide) council. Subsequently, the JUCSS held its first meeting on 27th April 1918.

### **What happened next?**

If the First World War was a spur to social studies, the next 20 years or so saw the JUCSS pulled in two, very different directions. Firstly, there were increasing demands for more specialised training over and above the general social studies' courses, particularly from within the new schools of social work in collaboration with the professional associations. So Macadam (1945) highlights the impact of the child guidance movement from the US on social work education in the UK in the post-war years: generous funding from the American Commonwealth Fund led to the establishment of a Child Guidance Council and Clinic in 1927, and from this point, mental health courses were introduced (firstly at LSE), paid for by the Commonwealth Fund. Meanwhile, training for probation workers was introduced at LSE, Liverpool and Birmingham, paid for by the Ministry of Munitions. These initiatives meant that much of the work of the JUCSS in the 1920s was centred on discussion of training for hospital almoners, club workers, and psychiatric social workers (Chapman, 2007).

The second development is one that harks back to the point made earlier about social administration and public administration's shared interests. In May 1936, the JUCSS amalgamated with the JUC for Public Administration, following an approach by the then Public Administration JUC Secretary, Tom (later Lord) Simey, on the grounds that there was 'considerable overlapping between the two bodies' (Chapman, 2007, p. 12). From this point on, although there was one JUC, the Public

Administration Committee (PAC) continued to operate as an autonomous grouping within the JUC (Interview with former PAC member, September 2018), and in the years that followed, it focused its attention on public administration degrees and training for the civil service (Chapman, 2007).

While the PAC developed its own agenda, the Social Administration Committee (SAC) became increasingly dominated by social work concerns, as government influence over social work education and the training of social workers increased after the Second World War (seen in the creation of the Central Training Council in Child Care in 1947, the Joint Council for Training of Social Workers in 1959, the Council for Training in Social Work in 1962, and latterly the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) in 1970). The period 1950s - 1970s was a busy time for social work, especially in the years leading up to and following the 1968 Social Work (Scotland) Act and the 1970 Local Authority Social Services Act, which required every local authority to establish a social services committee to carry out social services functions; Young and Burgess describe this time as 'dancing on a moving carpet' (2005, p. 2). By 1970, two new qualifying social work awards had been introduced: the Certificate in Social Services (CSS), a two-year, employment-based qualification for those already working in social service departments and voluntary agencies and the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW), a one or two year post-graduate course based in universities. The consequence for the JUC's SAC was that there was little time or opportunity to devote to social administration business; members were therefore pleased when social work educators asked to form their own sub-committee (SWEC) in 1966; this

went on to become a full committee ten years later (Interview with former SAC member, September 2018).

There was also significant realignment taking place within social administration at this time, as Kathleen Jones, Professor of Social Administration at the University of York, demonstrates in a well-respected social administration textbook. She writes:

‘Social Administration is a term which has changed its meaning. Originally it meant simply teaching about what the social services actually do, mainly for the benefit of intending social workers. The rapid development of the social services since 1948 has led to the emergence of many issues of academic study with much wider implications’ (cited in Brown, 1976, p. 18).

The textbook goes on to cover a range of topics including poverty, education, housing as well as the ‘personal social services’. As part of this development, social administration re-named itself Social Policy (see Bulmer *et al.*, 1989; Jones, 2006), and set up its own Social Policy Association (SPA), conference and journal. It also, over time, eased out of the JUC, until in 2005, it formally left the JUC. What remains today is a JUC for Public Administration & Social Work, with two separate committees and little in the way of shared activities (Interview with current JUC committee member, September 2018).

The committee structure within the JUC over time demonstrates clearly the changing relationship between the three subjects of social administration, public administration and social work (see Table 1).

Table 1: JUC committee structure over time

1918	The JUC for Social Studies (JUCSS) was created; Public Administration was not part of the JUC for Social Studies at this time; it had its own Institute for Public Administration, created in 1922, and its own JUC.
1936	The JUCSS and JUC for Public Administration amalgamated to form the JUC for Social Studies & Public Administration. At this point, the Public Administration Committee (PAC) was constituted as a sub-committee of the JUC, and operated independently, with all business subsequently ratified by the main council. Meanwhile the main council dealt with all social work and social administration business.
1955	Now called the JUC for Social & Public Administration, it reconstituted itself with two separate committees: a Social Administration Committee (SAC), to deal with social administration and social work education business, and the already-existing PAC. The main council met less frequently.
1966	The high level of social work education business within SAC led to the creation of a Social Work Education sub-committee in SAC.
1967	The Social Administration Association (SAA) was formed independent of the JUC for Social & Public Administration, later changing its name to the Social Policy Association (SPA) in 1987
1976	After putting pressure on the JUC, it was agreed that the Social Work Education sub-committee should become a full committee in its own right (SWEC): the JUC for Social & Public Administration now had

	three operational committees (SAC, PAC and SWEC)
2005	Social Policy left the JUC, which changed its name to the JUC for Public Administration & Social Work. From then on, most of the work of the JUC continued to be managed by its two committees, PAC and SWEC, subsequently ratified at annual council meetings.

This is, inevitably, only a brief outline of developments over a long period of time. For a fuller account of the development of public administration history, see Chapman (2007). For more information on social policy history, see Bulmer *et al.*, 1989; Brown (1976) and Wilding (2009). To find out more about social work education history in the UK, see Bamford, 2015; Lyons, 1999; McCulloch, 2018; Payne, 2005; Smith *et al.*, 2014; and The University of Edinburgh's centenary project website ([www.socialwork.ed.ac.uk/centenary/timeline/](http://www.socialwork.ed.ac.uk/centenary/timeline/)).

## Discussion

Four underpinning threads were identified at the beginning of this article, and have been touched on at various points throughout. Each will now be discussed in more detail.

### The changing nature of the relationship between the JUC and government

Reflecting again on the establishment of the JUCSS in 1918, this was clearly not a learned society of academics in any traditional sense; on the contrary, government had a clear agenda from the outset. What we see in the years that followed, is a gradual and ever-increasing involvement by government in activities related to social work education. This was demonstrated first in the creation of the Central Training



Council in Child Care in 1947 (in the wake of the 1946 Curtis Committee's damning report on local authority children's services), and then again in the Council for Training in Social Work in 1962 (following a critical report by the McBoyle Committee in 1961), the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) in 1970 (this time on the back of the Seebohm Report in England and Wales and the Social Work (Scotland) Act in 1968). At each stage, government sought to exert control not only over *what* was taught on social work courses, but also on *how* it was taught.

The introduction of the new undergraduate Degree in Social Work and the creation of the new regulatory bodies in 2001 (that is, the General Social Care Council (GSCC), the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), the Care Council for Wales (CCW), and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) were clearly a signal moment in the relationship between government and social work education more broadly. Although social work practitioners and educators celebrated the new degree level qualification and protection of title of 'social worker' as positive steps for the profession, nevertheless, the new statutory bodies now had the power to regulate both the workforce and social work education, including its curriculum and assessment. Of course, it would be wrong to suggest that the changes to social work and social work education were only driven by government; in reality, the JUC (alongside the professional association, the British Association for Social Workers) continued to play a part in the unfolding developments. But government intervention in social work education has, nevertheless, been at a level that other professional, academic disciplines (for example, law and medicine, which regulate their own members) might, arguably, have found unacceptable.

It is not the purpose of this article to comment further on this. But however we understand it, the fact remains: academics became progressively marginal in the face of increasing government involvement in social work education; they increasingly *responded to* government, instead of *informing* government. This is undoubtedly a point of tension for the discipline of social work within the academy, as we will now see.

#### The idea of collaboration/partnership and the challenge in realising this

It has already been stated that the idea of collaboration was a principle aim of the early JUCSS; collaboration between universities, across university departments, between universities and agencies (statutory and voluntary) and between schools of social study and citizens. In a careful analysis of the changing intellectual framework that underpinned British social policy in the first half of the twentieth century, Harris (1992) argues that what is often characterised as a shift from individualism to collectivism, from liberalism to a kind of socialism, misses the point that there was much in common in the different political and philosophical standpoints in the early years of the twentieth century. What was shared, he believes, was a view that society had changed, and because of this, people needed to work together to build a new society, one that would also reform the character of individual citizens.

The idea of collaboration was demonstrated clearly in the make-up of the JUCSS in 1918. We have already heard that that the council included prominent academics from the ten founding universities. What can also be observed, however, was that the JUCSS council was made up of scholars who held very different world-views. For

example, it included three leading idealist professors of philosophy (Professors Urwick from the LSE, Seth from Edinburgh and Muirhead from Birmingham) alongside the President of the Aristotelian Society, Professor Gillespie from Leeds. There were also notable proponents of the Charity Organization Society (COS), including Elizabeth Macadam, who held an individualistic approach to social need, alongside the Fabian socialist, Professor Sidney Webb. All were willing to sign up to the first report, written by the JUCSS Honorary Secretary/Treasurer, J. St. G. Heath (a recognised idealist and pacifist), in which he said:

‘[...] the whole aim in Social Study is to educate the citizen’s understanding of the social life of which he is a part; to train and test his judgment in dealing with its complexities – for the good of his neighbours as of himself; to furnish him with a background of fact and ideal which shall throw light on all his practice as an administrator; to increase his power of dealing with people and their present difficulties; and to inspire him with faith in the value of his efforts’ (1918, p.8).

As the JUC continued over time, so the university leaders were replaced on the council by disciplinary leaders, by heads of Social Administration and Public Administration and later by Social Work Education heads. We might think of this as a positive step, because it would have meant that people closer to the ‘coal-face’ were now making the decisions that affected them; then again we might suspect that ‘thinkers’ were replaced by ‘doers’. Again, this is probably an over-simplification, but it is certainly the case that the agenda of JUC meetings became more concerned with curricula and courses than with social reform and training for citizenship (Interview with former SAC member, September 2018).

### The role of training and practice within social work education

Training – and what came to be known as social work education - was central to the JUCSS's mission. Macadam (1945) locates the beginnings of social work education in the series of lectures begun by the COS in London, initially on a part-time basis, building on earlier training that had been offered through the Women's University Settlement and Octavia Hill's training for housing workers. By 1897, the classes had expanded under a joint committee consisting of representatives of the COS, the Women's University Settlement and the National Union of Women Workers (which later became the National Council of Women). In its first report in 1899, the committee identified that executive members of some district committees needed training in the principles of the COS as an 'engine of social reform'. The committee also noted concern about the reliability and availability of volunteer visitors. By 1901, the COS approached universities across the UK to form joint lecture committees for social workers. The same year, the London committee constituted itself as the London School of Sociology and Social Economics, teaching for the first time in the autumn of 1902.

Jones argues that it was through the London School of Sociology and Social Economics that the COS 'set out to demonstrate that their casework methods and underlying philosophy were truly scientific and deserved authority'; it wanted to lay claim to the idea that the COS was the 'expert in the organisation of relief' (1976, p.15). The COS offered training not only to its own caseworkers, but also to interested Poor Law officers and those referred to as 'friendly visitors' from other voluntary agencies, as a deliberate tactic to 'extend their hegemony over the entire

field of relief policies' (Jones, 1976, p. 19). Some lectures were also open to the public so that ideas could be disseminated to the general public (Smith, 1953). This may seem a forward-thinking, egalitarian response to educate the masses. However, it is also more fully understood in terms of the COS notion that social problems such as poverty, poor housing and destitution were individual, *moral* conditions, which could only be truly remediated by inculcating in the working-class poor the 'morality of citizenship', that is, self-help, self-reliance and independence (Jones, 1976, p. 5). At the same time, the London School of Sociology and Social Economics offered practical experience to registered students in various societies and agencies; most students spent a few months in a COS office. The establishment of the London School was followed soon after by the School of Training for Social Work at Liverpool University in 1905, initiated by Elizabeth Macadam, amongst others. By 1911, the Liverpool course had ten full-time students studying for a Diploma in Social Studies and 74 students, including clergymen, doctors, teachers, matrons, poor law officials, rescue, church and voluntary workers (Macadam, 1925).

Training was not only important to the COS, however. It was also central to the new socialist groupings including Fabians, Labour Party members and trade unionists and the Workers' Educational Association (founded in 1903) amongst others.

Training was also of fundamental importance to the professional associations in social work, many of which pre-dated the university-based courses. By the early 1960s, there were eight professional associations operating in the UK, reflecting the different strands of social work: Association of Family Case Workers, Moral Welfare Workers' Association, Society of Mental Welfare Officers, Association of Psychiatric Social Workers, Institute of Medical Social Workers, Association of Child Care

Officers, Association of Social Workers and National Association of Probation Officers. All the associations offered specialist training to their members, and after the new social studies degrees emerged in universities, they campaigned for the introduction of specialist courses, including Psychiatric Social Work (Henning, 2018), Hospital Social Work (Baraclough *et al.*, 1996), and later Child Care (Pugh, 1968; Thomas, 1970). Associations also continued to regulate entry to employment.

There is not space here to rehearse what happened next in detail. Suffice to say, the creation of the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) in 1970, and the introduction of generic graduate-level qualifying social work education in the UK in the early 2000's, sought to overturn some of the fragmentation that had characterised social work education. As the pendulum has swung again towards increasing specialisation, this risk has again become a reality. Today social work education still has to cope with competing demands: from government and higher education (with its focus on developing research and theory) on the one hand, and from professional groups and associations (with their focus on training for professional practice) on the other.

### The impact of gender (and especially women) within social work and social work education

Social work education history is full of the names of women, including Elizabeth Macadam, Eleanor Rathbone, Margaret Swell, Octavia Hill, Nora Milnes, Mary Lily Walker, Helen Bosanquet, Henrietta Barnett, Beatrice Webb, Eileen Younghusband, Clare Britton and Kay McDougall in the UK; Jane Addams, Mary Richmond and Charlotte Towle in the United States of America; and Alice Salomon in Germany.

The women met at international conferences each year and shared study visits at home and abroad, often with financial backing from the Commonwealth Fund of America. The history of social work education is, to a very real degree, the history of middle-class women's entry not just to the universities, but to public life. They made their way by building on the skills and experience they brought from the private sphere; they believed strongly that they had equal (but different) qualities, and so deserved equal access and treatment (Walton, 1975).

Inevitably, the first JUCSS Council did not demonstrate gender parity. On the contrary, there were many more men than women: twenty-one men to only eight women, all of whom were described as 'Miss'. Nevertheless, it is, arguably, remarkable that eight (albeit unmarried) women (28% of the total council) were considered to be of high enough calibre to merit appointment to the JUCSS in 1918. Women's participation in academic life was not in any way either typical or to be expected:

- Women were relatively new members of the academic community – they had been refused permission to enrol as undergraduate students until 1877 in England and Wales and 1892 in Scotland;
- Although middle-class women over 30 years were given the vote in 1918, universal suffrage was not granted to all women until 1928;
- Women could not be employed in administrative grades in the civil service until 1925;
- The marriage bar, which prohibited married women from joining the civil service and required women civil servants to resign when they became

married, was not abolished until 1946 for the Home Civil Service and 1973 for the Foreign Service ([www.civilservant.org.uk/women-history.htm](http://www.civilservant.org.uk/women-history.htm)).

Once appointed to the new university social study departments, women did not always find life easy, in spite of their social class and educational advantages. This is evident in Ann Oakley's (2014) highly personal, autobiographical account of the, at times, fractious relationship between her father, Professor Richard Titmuss, and the female social work staff in the Social Administration and Social Work Department at LSE in the 1940s and 1950s, and especially, between Titmuss and Eileen Younghusband. Their dispute was not, Oakley argues, only about gender or social class, although both may have played a part in the eventual breakdown in their relationship. Nor was it a new phenomenon. On the contrary, Pinker highlights that when the school began at LSE in 1903 it was named a School of Sociology, although it was, in fact, a school of social work. When the LSE assumed full responsibility in 1919, it became the Department of Social Science and Administration. Pinker reflects on this as follows:

'It is unclear why the new department was not named after social work, which was by then its main subject. Nevertheless this pattern was copied in other universities during the inter-war years, social work was incorporated into higher education largely under the aegis of social administration, although it was not until the 1960s that social administration was widely taught as a degree subject in its own right. Within this marriage of academic convenience the two disciplines followed increasingly divergent courses' (1989: p. 88).



Pinker argues that the academic reputations of the new departments were built on research in social administration, while the social work courses concentrated on raising standards of professional practice and establishing close working relationships with employer agencies. Biographical accounts from other universities, including Smith *et al.*'s (2016) account of the history of Barnett House, University of Oxford, and the University of Edinburgh's centenary website ([www.socialwork.ed.ac.uk/centenary](http://www.socialwork.ed.ac.uk/centenary)), add further confirmation of this account of the increasing separation between social administration and social work from the 1950s onwards. It was apparent, too, in the deliberations of the Social Administration Committee (Interview with former SAC member, September 2018). When the SAC voted in 1966 to allow the social work delegates to set up its own sub-committee, their motivations may have been both personal and academic.

It would be wrong, however, to ignore the part played by universities and especially by male academics in the JUC's origins. Academic men provided a principle leadership role in helping to develop courses, contributing to teaching and, of course, steering the new social studies' departments through the university systems. These men included: at LSE, Professor Urwick (and later Clement Attlee, R.H. Tawney and L.T. Hobhouse); at Liverpool, Professor Gonner, followed by Professor Alexander Morris Carr-Saunders; at Birmingham, John Muirhead and William Ashley; at Edinburgh, Professor Richard Lodge, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Professor James Seth and Rev Professors Martin, William Paterson and Alex Morgan. Institutional support from within the university was vital if the new schools and departments were to take root; in almost all instances, the new courses began 'under the auspices' of their host universities, and survived as independent bodies for ten years and more

before becoming fully incorporated by the universities. (Early examples of this include Liverpool, Birmingham, Glasgow and Edinburgh.) ‘Friends in high places’ were crucial to the introduction of the JUCSS, and social work within universities, and this, inevitably, meant senior academic men. Today, it is also the case that there are many more male professors of social work than women, in spite of the much greater representation of women in the social work academy as a whole. That, however, is the subject of another article (Cree *et al.*, forthcoming).

## **Conclusions**

This article began by asking: why was the JUCSS started? What was its purpose, and how did this change? I have suggested that the JUCSS’s purpose in 1918 was to promote, and at the same time, control the development of social studies. I have argued that the idea of ‘social studies’ as a uniting concept has been overtaken by three, increasingly distinctive academic disciplines, each with its own concerns and indeed, its own students. In the years since 1918, social work education has thrived, not least because of government interest in the outcomes of social work education, and government funding of both students and courses. There are now over 200 programmes of social work education at 79 universities across the UK. We have a graduate-entry profession, protected title and a range of postgraduate and post-qualifying opportunities for students of social work. We also have a strong committee within the JUC, the Social Work Education Committee (SWECC), with three active sub-committees, informing a range of stakeholders and sharing information about social work education, as well as running an annual conference ([www.juc.ac.uk/social-work-education-committee/](http://www.juc.ac.uk/social-work-education-committee/)).

There is, however, a less positive story to be told here. As I have argued, there is little sense today of a JUC with a shared vision as outlined in its beginnings, of a JUC with a 'differentness in spirit, method and purpose'. As for social work education, there is considerable fragmentation, if not outright fracturing across the four countries of the UK, with considerable uncertainties ahead (McCulloch, 2018). Of the original JUC members, Aberystwyth University, Glasgow, Liverpool, King's College, LSE, Newcastle, Oxford and St Andrews no longer offer social work programmes, and social work education today is increasingly located in post-1992 universities. At the same time, critics have accused government-funded 'fast-track' programmes, Frontline and Think Ahead, of undermining the broader intellectual aims of social work education, while drawing funding away from generic programmes. Current social work education cannot be understood except as a creature of austerity, the neoliberal project and globalisation (Ferguson, 2017).

Looking ahead, the impact of Brexit is, as yet, unknown, although the *Higher Education Risk Analysis Register 2017* (RSM, 2017) points to the possible damaging effects on student numbers, opportunities for overseas students and staff, and research funding. Meanwhile, two very different visions of a future JUC are possible. Either it will split into a JUC for Social Work Education and a JUC for Public Administration (in other words, it will go back to its 1918 structure), or members will find the magic ingredient that allows them to pull together again as a unitary whole. There were hints of the possibility of this at the JUC centenary meeting in London in October, when the social work educators present called for a stronger emphasis in the JUC on social justice and values. This would, curiously, take us back to the early idealism of the JUC, which anticipated that social study would inform both social

reform of society and individual reform of citizens. The language may have changed, but the beliefs are similar. The question remains: how might a re-energised JUC heal some of these internal divisions, and lead to a more powerful restatement of the principles of public service and citizenship today? Answering this question is our shared challenge.

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